Numb. DXLI.

The SPECTATOR.

Format enim Natura prius nos intus ad omnem
Fortunarum habitum; juvat, aut impellit ad iram,
Aut ad humum mœrore gravi deducit & angit;
Post effert animi motus interprete Lingua. Hor.

Thursday, November 20. 1712.

MY Friend the *Templar*, whom I have so often mentioned in these Writings, having determined to lay aside his Poetical Studies, in order to a closer Pursuit of the Law, has put together, as a Farewell Essay, some Thoughts concerning *Action* and *Pronunciation*, which he has given me leave to communicate to the Publick. They are chiefly collected from his Favourite Author, *Cicero*, who is known to have been an intimate Friend of *Roscius* the Actor, and a good Judge of Dramatical Performances, as well as the most Eloquent Pleader of the Time in which he liv'd.

CICERO concludes his celebrated Books *de Oratore* with some Precepts for Pronunciation and Action, without which Part he affirms that the best Orator in the World can never succeed; and an indifferent one, who is Master of this, shall gain great Reputation. What could make a stronger Impression, says he, than those Exclamations of *Gracchus*, —— *Whither shall I turn? Wretch that I am! To what Place betake my self? Shall I go to the Capitol? —— Alas! it is overflowed with my Brother's Blood. Or shall I retire to my House? Yet there I behold my Mother plung'd in Misery, weeping and despairing!* These Breaks and Turns of Passion, it seems, were so enforced by the Eyes, Voice and Gesture of the Speaker, that his very Enemies could not refrain from Tears. I insist, says *Tully*, upon this the rather, because our Orators, who are as it were Actors of the Truth it self, have quitted this manner of speaking, and the Players, who are but the Imitators of Truth, have taken it up.

I shall, therefore, pursue the Hint he has here given me, and for the Service of the *British* Stage I shall Copy some of the Rules which this great *Roman* Master has laid down; yet, without confining my self wholly to his Thoughts or Words; and to adapt this Essay the more to the Purpose for which I intend it, instead of the Examples he has inserted in his Discourse, out of the ancient Tragedies, I shall make use of parallel Passages out of the most Celebrated of our own.

The Design of Art is to assist Action as much as possible in the Representation of Nature; for the Appearance of Reality is that which moves us in all Representations, and these have always the greater Force, the nearer they approach to Nature, and the less they shew of Imitation.

Nature her self has assigned, to every Emotion of the Soul, its peculiar Cast of the Countenance, Tone of Voice, and Manner of Gesture; and the whole Person, all the Features of the Face and Tones of the Voice answer, like Strings upon musical Instruments, to the Impressions made on them by the Mind. Thus the Sounds of the Voice, according to the various Touches which raise them, form themselves into an Acute or Grave, Quick or Slow, Loud or Soft Tone. These too may be subdivided into various Kinds of Tones, as the gentle, the rough, the contracted, the diffused, the continued, the intermitted, the broken, abrupt, winding, softned, or elevated. Every one of these may be employed with Art and Judgment; and all supply the Actor, as Colours do the Painter, with an expressive Variety.

Anger exerts its peculiar Voice in an acute, raised, and hurrying Sound. The passionate Character of King *Lear*, as it is admirably drawn by *Shakespear*, abounds with the strongest Instances of this kind.

—— Death! Confusion!
Fiery? —— what Quality? —— why Gloster, Gloster!
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall, and his Wife.
Are they inform'd of this? My Breath and Blood!
Fiery? the fiery Duke? —— &c.

Sorrow and Complaint demand a Voice quite different, flexible, slow, interrupted, and modulated in a mournful Tone; as in that pathetical Soliloquy of Cardinal *Wolsey* on his Fall.

Farewell! —— A long Farewell to all my Greatness!
This is the State of Man! —— to day he puts forth
The tender Leaves of Hopes; to-morrow Blossoms,
And bears his blushing Honours thick upon him.
The third Day comes a Frost, a killing Frost,
And when he thinks, good easie Man, full surely
His Greatness is a ripening, nips his Root,
And then he falls as I do.

We have likewise a fine Example of this in the whole Part of *Andromache* in the *Distrest Mother*, particularly in these Lines,

I'll go, and in the Anguish of my Heart
Weep o'er my Child —— If he must dye, my Life
Is wrapt in his, I shall not long survive.
'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd Life,
Groan'd in Captivity, and outliv'd Hector.
Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together!
Together to the Realms of Night we'll go;
There to thy ravish'd Eyes thy Sire I'll shew,
And point him out among the Shades below.

Fear expresses it self in a low, hesitating and abject Sound. If the Reader considers the following Speech of Lady *Macbeth*, while her Husband is about the Murder of *Duncan* and his Grooms, he will imagine her even affrighted with the Sound of her own Voice while she is speaking it.

Alas!

Alas! I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done; th' Attempt and not the Deed
Confounds us —— Hark!—I laid the Daggers ready,
He cou'd not miss them. Had he not resembled
My Father as he slept, I had done it.

Courage assumes a louder Tone, as in that Speech of Don *Sebastian.*

Here satiate all your Fury;
Let Fortune empty her whole Quiver on me,
I have a Soul that like an ample Shield
Can take in all, and Verge enough for more.

Pleasure dissolves into a luxurious, mild tender and joyous Modulation; as in the following Lines in *Caius Marius,*

Lavinia! *O there's Musick in the Name,*
That softning me to infant Tenderness
Makes my Heart spring, like the first Leaps of Life.

And Perplexity is different from all these; grave, but not bemoaning, with an earnest uniform Sound of Voice; as in that celebrated Speech of *Hamlet,*

To be, or not to be?—that is the Question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the Mind to suffer
The Slings and Arrows of outragious Fortune,
Or to take Arms against a Sea of Troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep;
No more; and by a Sleep to say we end
The Heart-ake, and the thousand natural Shocks
That Flesh is Heir to; 'Tis a Consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep——
To sleep, perchance to dream! Ay, there's the Rub.
For in that Sleep of Death what Dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this Mortal Coil,
Must give us pause. —— There's the Respect
That makes Calamity of so long Life;
For who would bear the Whips and Scorns of Time,
Th' Oppressor's Wrong, the proud Man's Contumely,
The Pangs of dispis'd Love, the Law's Delay,
The Insolence of Office, and the Spurns
That patient Merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his Quietus make
With a bare Bodkin? who wou'd Fardles bear
To groan and sweat under a weary Life?
But that the Dread of something after Death,
The undiscover'd Country, from whose Bourn
No Traveller returns, puzzles the Will,
And makes us rather chuse those Ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.

As all these Varieties of Voice are to be directed by the Sense, so the Action is to be directed by the Voice, and with a beautiful Propriety, as it were, to enforce it. The Arm, which by a strong Figure *Tully* calls *the Orator's Weapon,* is to be sometimes raised and extended, and the Hand, by its Motion, sometimes to lead, and sometimes to follow the Words, as they are uttered. The Stamping of the Foot too has its proper Expression in Contention, Anger, or absolute Command. But the Face is the Epitome of the whole Man, and the Eyes are, as it were, the Epitome of the Face; for which Reason, he says, the best Judges among the *Romans* were not extreamly pleased even with *Roscius* himself in his Masque. No Part of the Body, besides the Face, is capable of as many Changes as there are different Emotions in the Mind, and of expressing them all by those Changes. Nor is this to be done without the Freedom of the Eyes; therefore *Theophrastus* called one, who barely rehearsed his Speech with his Eyes fixt, an *absent Actor.*

As the Countenance admits of so great Variety, it requires also great Judgment to govern it. Not that the Form of the Face is to be shifted on every Occasion, lest it turn to Farce and Buffoonery; but it is certain, that the Eyes have a wonderful Power of marking the Emotions of the Mind, sometimes by a stedfast Look, sometimes by a careless one; now by a sudden Regard then by a joyful Sparkling, as the Sense of the Words is diversify-ed; for Action is, as it were, the Speech of the Features and Limbs, and must therefore conform it self always to the Sentiments of the Soul. And it may be observed, that in all which relates to the Gesture, there is a wonderful Force implanted by Nature; since the Vulgar, the Unskillful, and even the most Barbarous are chiefly affected by this. None are moved by the Sound of Words, but those who understand the Language; and the Sense of many things is lost upon Men of a dull Apprehension; but Action is a kind of Universal Tongue; all Men are subject to the same Passions, and consequently know the same Marks of them in others, by which they themselves express them.

Perhaps some of my Readers may be of Opinion, that the Hints I have here made use of, out of *Cicero,* are somewhat too refined for the Players on our Theatre; in answer to which I venture to lay it down, as a Maxim, that without Good Sense no one can be a good Player, and that he is very unfit to personate the Dignity of a *Roman* Hero, who cannot enter into the Rules for Pronunciation and Gesture delivered by a *Roman* Orator.

There is another thing which my Author does not think too minute to insist on, tho' it is purely mechanical; and that is the right *pitching* of the Voice. On this Occasion he says the Story of *Gracchus,* who employed a Servant with a little Ivory Pipe to stand behind him, and give him the right Pitch, as often as he wandered too far from the proper Modulation. Every Voice, says *Tully,* has its particular Medium and Compass, and the Sweetness of Speech consists in leading it thro' all the Variety of Tones naturally, and without touching any Extreme. Therefore, says he, *Leave the Pipe at home, but carry the Sense of this Custom with you.*

ADVERTISEMENTS.

At the Desire of several Persons of Quality.
By her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

At the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane* this present Thursday being the 20th Day of November, will be presented The Rise and Fall of Cajus Marius. By Her Majesty's Command. No Person to be admitted behind the Scenes.

Never Perform'd before.

At the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, on Saturday next, being the 22nd Day of November, will be presented a new Opera call'd The Faithful Shepherd. Compos'd by Mr. Handel. The Parts to be performed by Signior Cavaliero Valeriano Pellegrini, Signor Valentino Urbani, Signora Piloti Schiavonetti, Signiora Margarita de l'Epine, Mrs. Barbier, and Mr. Leveridge.

An Entertainment by Mr. CLINCH of Bar-net, who Imitates the Flute, Double Curtel, the Organ with 3 Voices, the Horn, Hunting and Pack of Hounds, the Swan Double, the Old Woman, the Dutchess Minuet, Chair Bells. All Instruments are performed by his natural Voice. To which is added an Essex Song by Mr. Clinch himself. To be seen this present Evening at 7 a Clock, at the Queen's-Arms Tavern on Ludgate-Hill. Price 1 s.

In a few Days will be Published,

A Poem intituled, An Ode to the Creator of the World, occasioned by the Fragment of Orpheus. Printed for Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's Head over against Catherine-street in the Strand.

The Books following are this Day Published,

Hiero; or the Condition of a Tyrant, translated from the Greek of Xenophon, with Observations, pr. 6 d. The Motives to the 5 Vols. of Tatlers, and to the new Vols. of the Spectators, pr. 1 s. The 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17th Parts of the Odes of Horace, Lat. and Eng. with a Translation of Dr. Bently's Notes, pr. 6 d. each. Mr. Gardiner on the Beatitudes, pr. 3 s. 6 d. Dr. Tillotson's 16 Sermons, pr. 6 s. Homer by Mad. Dacier, 5 Vols. A new Translation of C. Nepos. Mr. Steele's three Comedies. The Complete Court-keeper. A second Edition of Institutio Legalis. Mr. Gordon's Tacitus. All Printed for Bernard Lintott, between the two Temple-Gates in Fleet-street.

Just Published,

A neat Pocket Edition of the 3d and 4th Vols. of Spectators, with an Index to the whole 4 Vols. Tatlers in 4 Vols. The Funeral, Tender Husband and Lying Lovers, Comedies written by Mr. Steele. Prior's Poems, Milton's Paradise Lost, Hudibras, and the Christian Hero, by Mr. Steele, the 1st Edition. Printed, and Sold by Owen Lloyd near the Church in the Temple. N. B. All are Printed with an Entire Letter, and in a small Pocket Volume.

LONDON: Printed for *S. Buckley,* and *J. Tonson:* And Sold by *A. Baldwin* in Warwick-lane